

EMS

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EMS Funding Sources Vary

The easiest way to fund an emergency medical services system might be to find a kindly millionaire in need of emergency medical services, work a miracle of care for him (or her) and then in his gratitude he might establish an emergency medical services fund.

(Or perhaps he might find the service to be lacking and, if still able, he might fund a beginning system.)

However, Montana is not overflowing with kindly millionaires in need of emergency services, such as a quick wallet transplant. Therefore Montana EMS systems must look toward other sources of funding.

Other funding is available from local, state and federal governments and from private sources.

Local funding

Other than using general funds from the city or county coffers, an emergency medical system can seek funding from a one-mill levy allowed for ambulance districts. Many counties already have established ambulance districts which were given legal sanction by the 1967 legislature.

As defined by law an ambulance district may be within a city, county or town or it may be a joint service for a number of cities, counties or towns.

To set up an ambulance service 15 per cent of the voters registered in an area in the last preceding general election must sign a peti-

tion requesting an ambulance service. The cost of sharing an ambulance service with other cities, counties or towns is apportioned according to use. The service may operate through the governmental body or it may be contracted out.

After an area establishes an ambulance district the governmental body can levy one mill for the service in addition to all other allowable levies.

This source of funding, especially in areas with a small tax base, might not generate enough money to update systems or replace ex-

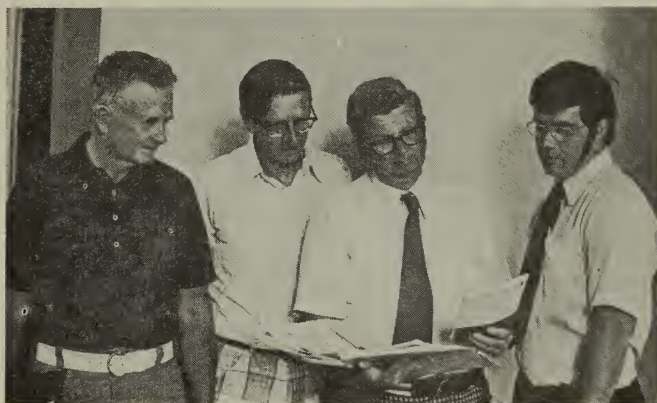
pensive worn-out equipment. But it can help defray some of the operating costs.

State funding

Limited state funding is available to help provide local funds for matching the Emergency Medical Services grants available under the federal EMS Act. Other potential funding sources might be proposed before the 1975 legislature.

The 1974 legislature allocated \$100,000 for use by the state

(Continued on page 3)



Robert Heggie, second from right, regional program director for Emergency Medical Services of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, confers with, from left to right, Cal Vaughn and Gordon Wilson of the Indian Health Service and Jan Henry of the Fort Peck Planning District about an EMS planning grant received by Roosevelt County. Wilson is the executive secretary of the EMS Council in Poplar.

Grant Awarded for Communications

A tri-county organization of Missoula, Ravalli and Mineral counties has received a \$389,720 grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation for improving a communications system within the counties.

The three counties, composing state planning district 11, joined 49 other successful applicants out of the 258 that had originally applied.

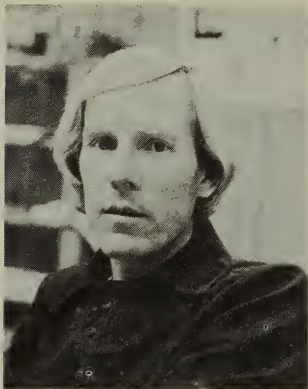
The Missoula County Commissioners were chosen as the governing body for the grant and they set up a Robert Wood Johnson Policy Board to direct activities associated with implementing the grant. In addition to representatives from the three county commissioners' offices, the board is made up of representatives of the Missoula Emergency Services for Health (MESH) council and Missoula city government. Project director is Dave Hunt, vice chairman of the MESH council and on a two-year leave of absence from the Missoula City Engineer's Office.

Among the priority items under the grant is the selection of a location for a centralized communications center. A feasibility study requested by the Missoula County Commissioners to determine whether the Robert Wood Johnson grant should be accepted recommended acceptance of the grant only if the county sheriff's department and the city police department merged operations.

In a meeting of the board July 12 Hunt proposed that another feasibility study be done on possible locations of a centralized dispatch center. Following the feasibility study an independent evaluator would recommend a location and the policy board could then open bids for communications equipment. "I would be optimistic in getting the hardware in operation by two years," Hunt said.

Hunt told the board that he is checking into funding from the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration which he said might consider giving 95 per cent funding to do the feasibility study of consolidating the law enforcement dispatch centers and determining expected on-going costs of the dispatch center for the period after the grant expires.

Idaho and Wyoming also received Robert Wood Johnson grants. The Idaho Department of Environmental and Community Services received \$399,851 while the Wyoming Hospital Research and Education Foundation received \$328,845.



Dave Hunt was appointed project director for the governing board of the Robert Wood Johnson grant awarded to Missoula, Ravalli and Mineral counties to improve the communications system.

Ambulance Purchased For Big Hole Valley

A fund drive by members of the Wisdom Volunteer Fire Department saw fruition in July when the small community of about 160 persons received a brand new ambulance.

The unit cost about \$9,900 which the fire volunteers accumulated through fund drives over the past year.

Even though the old ambulance had only four ambulance calls last year the fire department volunteers wanted a new ambulance. Some people weren't calling the ambulance, which was an old station wagon, and were using private transportation, Wisdom Sheriff Doug Martin said.

Big Hole Valley residents, including the communities of Wisdom, Jackson, Wise River, Polaris and Elkhorn, will benefit from the new ambulance, which is staffed by the volunteer fire department, headed by Larry Christiansen.

EMS Bureau Compiling Communications Booklets

An Emergency Medical Services communications booklet, to be issued by this September, will include basic procedures for radio systems, laws on communications required by the Federal Communications Commission and reference data.

Directors of Civil Defense and Emergency Services from Big Horn and Cascade Counties met with George Marshall, newly appointed communications director for the EMS Bureau, and with Robert Quam, EMS Bureau chief, in mid-July to discuss criteria for the communications booklet.

The basic radio operating procedures will include a description of how to operate a radio and telephone system and how to answer incoming calls. The reference data will list by counties all hospitals and ambulances participating in the EMS system.

Bill Murray, Cascade County CD director and EMS Council vice-chairman in Cascade County, and Norm Parrent, CD director for Big Horn County, stressed that when new systems are installed they should be able to plug in to nearby communications systems.

The communications booklet will offer information on compatible systems, including the frequencies at which radios should operate if they are to plug into area-wide hospital and ambulance communications. Both Murray and Parrent have many years of experience in operating communications equipment.

Also decided at the meeting was the importance of communications training at the local level with guidelines from state and federal levels.

The communications booklet is being funded through the Mountain States Regional Medical Program.

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Second class postage applied for at Helena, Montana.

Sources to Check for Funding

(Continued from page 1)

Department of Health and Environmental Sciences to help match EMS grants. The tentative guidelines for use of these funds is to make available up to one-half of the required local matching funds or up to \$10,000 whichever is less.

For example, if a community's total EMS program costs \$48,000 and it had received a \$24,000 EMS grant it would have to match it with \$24,000. The state could chip in up to \$10,000 and the community would have to find the other \$14,000 through hard cash or by assigning "in-kind" (equivalent cash) values to donated equipment, facilities, services or materials. For more information contact: Emergency Medical Services Bureau, Department of Health and Environmental Sciences, Helena, MT, 59601, or call 449-3895.

Federal funding

One of the primary sources of federal funding is the EMS Act, passed in November, 1973. Funding is available under the act through Fiscal Year (FY) 1976, but Regional EMS Program Director Robert Heggie said applications for funding in FY 1976 must be received prior to June 30, 1975.

Applications for EMS grants are reviewed by either the federal government, if the grant requests are large, or by a regional committee of non-federal people if the grants are less than \$45,000 for planning or \$250,000 for implementation requests, according to Heggie.

Five types of grants are available under the EMS Act: 1202, planning; 1203, implementation; 1204, expansion; 1205, evaluation and 776, training. Heggie's office in Region VIII of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare in Denver has application kits for the various grants.

The training and implementation grants do not require local matching funds, but the other grants require matching on a 50-50 basis. Hardship cases can apply for a 75 federal funding, 25 local match in the first year and in the second year of funding would have to provide 75 per cent to the

federal government's 25 per cent.

Another source of federal funding is through the Civil Defense. The Civil Defense can fund requests for equipment or for emergency systems dispatch centers if these meet CD guidelines. Money is available on a 50-50 basis although the funds appear to be limited. Applications should be made through the County Civil Defense Director.

Funding for highway signs, emergency vehicles, radios and training can come under the Highway Safety Act. Al Goke, state administrator of the act in the Highway Traffic Safety Division of the Intergovernmental Relations department, said if federal funding remains the same he would have between \$80,000 and \$100,000 available next year.

Goke said this amount of money is able to help five or six communities a year and funding is directed to areas where the money would do the most for traffic safety, not necessarily for emergency medical systems.

Funding levels vary depending on need and can range from 50-50 funding to almost 100 per cent.

Indian tribes can receive help through the Highway Safety Act which considers all the Indian tribes in the nation as the 51st state with the Secretary of the Department of Interior as the "governor" of the state. Any tribal government can apply for funding through the National American Indian Safety Council, Inc., Albuquerque, N.M., or through the Department of the Interior.

Monies from the Hill-Burton Act to assist hospital construction are still available although the Act is destined to expire on Sept. 30. (It already died once on June 30, but received a Congressional reprieve.) These funds are available on a 40-60 match.

Applications must be sent to the state Division of Hospital and Medical Facilities by Sept. 1, 1974 for Hill-Burton assistance in construction or modernization of medical facilities.

No funds are available from the current fiscal year but funds impounded by President Nixon have

been released making \$1,208,826 available from FY 1973 and \$1,257,118 available from FY 1974.

Guaranteed Loan Funds of \$2,688,000 from FY 1973 are also available. One plan allows Hill-Burton to loan up to 90 per cent of needed money and then to pick up three per cent of the going interest rate, essentially writing off that three per cent from the amount to be repaid.

For further information on Hill-Burton funding contact: Construction Bureau, Division of Hospital and Medical Facilities, Department of Health and Environmental Sciences, 1424 9th Ave., Helena, MT, 59601, or call 449-2037.

The Law Enforcement Assistance Administration also has funding available, but only for projects connected with criminal justice. Possible projects under this requirement include funding for law enforcement communications systems which can be used in centralized dispatch, funding of a feasibility study for merging law enforcement services and possible funding of communication repeater sites.

Private Sources

As Missoula, Mineral and Ravalli counties can attest, funding is available from private sources. In a joint application these three counties just received a \$389,720 Robert Wood Johnson grant made through a foundation affiliated with the Johnson and Johnson company. No other grants are available from this source this year, but it is a possible source for the future.

Bake sales, rummage sales, fund drives also provide money. In 1973 Shelby residents rallied and raised \$5,600 in donations in five weeks to buy a heart monitor, defibrillator and IV equipment for use in their ambulance service.

Most of these sources require that applications be submitted a year before funding is available.

And although money is available from many sources, most of these sources are scheduled to dryup after a period of years. The search for money, as most people already know, is endless.

Trip Report Forms to be Here Soon

Ambulance trip report forms are expected to be in the mail to the Emergency Medical Services Bureau on August 7. After the Bureau receives them they will be available to Montana ambulance services with trained Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT).

According to Jerry Luchau, ambulance licensing and EMT program manager, the forms will go to about 25 to 30 areas. "They will be used in areas that are willing to work with the form, that have trained EMTs," Luchau said. "The trip report form will be used for a period of time and then its use will be evaluated. If there are any major revisions they will be made then and hopefully implemented on an on-going basis in all areas that have the capability of utilizing the form."

The triplicate forms have copies for the ambulance service, for the hospital and for the EMS Bureau for use in research.

The information requested by the form includes the ambulance agency name, the patient's name, home address, phone number and insurance company. The research copy is designed to omit the patient's name for confidentiality purposes.

Statistical data to help ambulance services check their efficiency includes times of the accident, of the reception of the call, departure of the ambulance, arrival of the ambulance at the accident, and arrival at the destination, such as a hospital.

Other facts required by this section concern the mileage to the accident and to the hospital or other destination, the crew and the name of the destination.

Information for the hospital to which the accident victim is taken

Montana Receives Five EMS Grants

Five Montana communities have received grants totaling about \$99,000 under the Emergency Medical Services Act.

Three of the grants were for planning EMS systems and two of the grants were for implementing systems, specifically through buying and installing equipment.

Receiving grants were: St. Vincent's Hospital in Billings, \$21,540 for planning; the Hill County Board of Commissioners, \$27,710 for implementation; the Missoula City-County Health Department, \$15,000 for planning; the Roosevelt County Board of Commissioners, \$9,000 for planning, and the Teton County Board of Commissioners, \$26,324 for implementation.

All of the grant recipients worked through EMS Councils in obtaining the grants, which underwent review by five non-federal persons who came from each of the five states that had submitted grant applications in this region.

Two of the largest grants went to the North Dakota State Health Department (\$467,781) and to the Utah Division of Health (\$643,974) for planning a state-wide emergency medical services plan.

includes a list of suspected illnesses, signs and symptoms, sites of injuries, suspected injuries, cause of injury, aid given to the patient and vital signs. An area is also set aside for comments by the ambulance attendant.

Emergency Vehicles Display New Emblems

The familiar red cross emblem used on ambulances in the past is giving way to a new design called the "star of life" symbol.

The Department of Transportation requires the emblem on all new emergency vehicles purchased under its Emergency Medical Services program if the vehicles comply with its established criteria.

Jerry Luchau, ambulance licensing and EMT program manager, said the EMS Bureau is not stressing immediate change to the new symbol but thinks that it should be added when new ambulances are purchased.

The "star of life" symbolizes the staff of Aesculapius, the Roman god of medicine and healing, and shows a snake twined around a staff centered on an emblem with six intersecting bars, the same emblem used on the EMS newsletter masthead.

For more information about the use of the emblem contact: Jerry Luchau, Emergency Medical Services Bureau, Department of Health and Environmental Sciences, Helena, Montana 59601.

Emergency Medical Service Bureau
State Department of Health
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